

From: Rich
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/13/01 6:01am
Subject: Microsoft 'settlement'

12th of December, 2001

This letter is written with respect to the proposed Microsoft settlement. Let me state that I am a software architect and database administrator and have been in the IT industry for about 16 years. In addition I have a B.S. degree in Computer Science with a g.p.a. of 3.792 on a 4.0 basis so I am reasonably intelligent and have direct experience in the field that Microsoft is involved in. I have worked on everything from embedded systems in assembly language up through 4GL systems running on UNIX and pretty much everything in between. I have developed on Microsoft based platforms as well as DEC and UNIX based systems and so have seen many different aspects of the industry. During my 16 years in this business I have repeatedly seen the impact of Microsoft's behavior and watched them crush promising technologies and products from competing companies by the use of their position on the PC desktop. Rarely have they won a market by technical excellence or innovation - I might go so far as to say never. They have used whatever means at their disposal, whether ethical or otherwise, to take over market after market, and along the way have done a very real dis-service to the industry and to the consumer. It is patently obvious that the company is now using their dominance in the desktop OS market and the Office software market to charge ever increasing amounts for their software and to damage the abilities of other companies to properly engage in producing competing products. In the end those of us in the industry would just like to see real competition re-introduced into the software market so that there could be real innovation along with non-monopolistic pricing for PC based software. The current settlement proposal does nothing to provide for any of that, and in my view, actually rewards Microsoft for their illegal behavior. To call the DOJ/Microsoft proposal punitive is like calling the Taliban tolerant - a complete reversal of the sense of the word involved. Many of us in the industry have a deep concern about where the internet technologies will be in five years if this settlement is made law. Will the internet wind up just being an extension of the MS desktop monopoly? If they are not restrained in a very real fashion that will indeed be the result and then the whole world will really get to suffer as every action taken on the internet will have an attendant fee being sent to Redmond Washington along with the company probably making a mockery of the idea of personal privacy on the internet. I hope our government, that at least states it's love of freedom, can see clearly enough to realize that the software industry, and therefore our nations economy and commerce, cannot be truly free while an un-restrained Microsoft roams the land unfettered.

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Rich Mycroft
770-667-5484

255 Summerfield Drive
Alpharetta, GA 30022
rmycroft@mediaone.net